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Title: Need to release adequate funds to the Government of Karnataka for providing relief to the people affected by severe drought in the state.

SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA (HASSAN): Sir, Karanata has suffered the worse drought in three decades. One hundred fifty four *Talukas* out of one hundred seventy five have suffered the wrath of drought and they have been declared as drought affected. This year the deficit in monsoon rainfall is 50 to 80 per cent. The Southern districts of Bangalore, Mysore, Mandya and Tumkur did not receive enough rainfall to resume sowing or nurture crops in an area spread over 18.6 lakh hectares. In fact, this is the main reason why farmers have been violently resisting release of Cauvery waters to Tamil Nadu.

The major irrigation reservoirs like Krishna Raja Sagar, Hemavathi, Bhadra, Ghataprabha, Malaprabha and Tungabhadra have recorded levels far below the average of the last 10 years. Many rivers including the key rivers Shimsa, Thungabhadra, Vedavathi, Arkavathi have gone dry and so have minor irrigation tanks.

A Central team consisting of ten persons toured the drought affected districts in groups during September 2002. Karnataka State requires Rs.600 crore for the drought relief work and I, therefore, urge upon the hon. Prime Minister to release this amount without any further delay.